Office of Developmental Primary Care

Improving outcomes for people with developmental disabilities

Managing a Behavioral Crisis

Safe

- Introduce yourself
- Use plain, clear, concise words
- Explain your intentions
- Avoid sudden touch or grab
- Formally end your contact, e.g "I am going to leave now."
- Wait it out (Don't just do something, stand there)

Calm

- Control your affect and behavior
- Redirect attention to something concrete, factual, and non-emotional
- Stand back to avoid getting injured
- Be aware of your position in relation to person (flight is better than fight)
- Remove objects that can be weaponized and extra people

Affirmation

- Set clear limits
- Minimize distractions
- Use kind, encouraging words
- Repeat a positive mantra
- Allow breaks

Routine

- Redirect to task at hand
- Cue person
- Provide visual support
- Be consistent

Empathy

- Ask what happened to you; not what is wrong with you
- Offer another way to get need met
- Avoid repeatedly disagreeing

Develop intervention plan

Lipsky, D, Richards, W. Managing Meltdowns Using the S.C.A.R.E.D. Calming Technique with Children and Adults with Autism. 2009. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. London.

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